

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

HISTORICAL REVIEW --

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METROPOLITAN YMCA
OF MONTREAL

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS
UNIVERSITY AND SCHOOLS

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The present faculties of Arts, Science, and Commerce of Sir George Williams University developed from the formal evening education work of the Montreal Young Men's Christian Association. This work, inaugurated in 1873, represented Canada's earliest efforts in evening courses for employed young men. (It was initiated largely at the hand of Dr. F. W. Kelly, a member of the Protestant Central Board of Examiners and President of the Montreal YMCA. The classes drew as lecturers some of the great names of Canadian science and education, including Sir William Dawson, Principal of McGill; Mr. P.S. Ross, who taught Commercial Arithmetic and Bookkeeping; J. T. Donald, Chemistry; Dr. Roddick, on Health; Sir William Osler, on The Brain; and Dr. Proudfoot, on The Eye.)

At the turn of the century, the classes were coordinated into the system known as the YMCA Schools. In 1920, largely to serve as a rehabilitation scheme for World War I veterans, the Evening High School was inaugurated, and in 1926 the name Sir George Williams College was adopted to designate, from that time forward, the expanding formal adult evening education program of the Young Men's Christian Association in Montreal.

[The College was first conducted under the terms of the charter of the Montreal Young Men's Christian Association (1851). In March, 1948, however, the College was granted a specific Charter by the Provincial Legislature, establishing it a body corporate and politic, for the purpose of conducting a university in the Province of Quebec.]

[In 1956, Sir George Williams College occupied a new \$3 million building constructed especially for its use from funds contributed by the Montreal community. With its efficient new building, and without a campus, located as it is in the heart of downtown Montreal where it is most readily accessible to its students, Sir George Williams has grown over the years, not only in numbers, but in the acceptance and esteem of its community and among other institutions of higher learning. With 90 years experience in evening education, from elementary school to university level, Sir George Williams University is Canada's foremost project in formal evening adult education. Its status was clarified on December 18, 1959, when the Provincial Legislature passed an amendment to the 1948 act of incorporation changing the name to Sir George Williams University.

The University is presently engaged in the preparation of a \$22 million expansion to its downtown concrete campus. A capital grant from the Provincial Government

and a proposed capital funds campaign are expected to provide for a unique high-rise 10-storey university building at Bishop and Burnside Streets by 1966. This will allow enrollment to grow from the present 2500 day and 6300 evening students to 5000 day and 10,000 evening students.